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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/576,283	12/11/2006	Birger J. Natvig	OPA 329	1861
23581 7590 03/17/2009 KOLISCH HARTWELL, P.C. 200 PACIFIC BUILDING 520 SW YAMHILL STREET PORTLAND, OR 97204				
EXAMINER				
MAYO, TARA L				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3671				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
03/17/2009		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/576,283

**Applicant(s)**

NATVIG, BIRGER J.

**Examiner**

TARA MAYO-PINNOCK

**Art Unit**

3671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 April 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. The prior rejection of claims 4 and 8 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph has been overcome by the claim amendments filed 05 December 2008.

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 4 recites the limitation "the aft part" on line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. For the purpose of prosecution, the claim has been considered dependent upon claim 3.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 5 through 8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Crout et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,823,564 A).

Crout et al. '564, as best seen in Figure 5, disclose a seagoing vessel (100) for removing and installing and transporting an offshore jacket structure (20), said vessel comprising: with regard to claim 5,

a ballastable main buoyancy section (102,104,118,120,122, collectively) and two auxiliary buoyancy sections (110,112) protruding in the same direction on either side of the main section, characterized in that the main buoyancy section is generally planar and has in plan view substantially the outline of an isosceles triangle with an extension at the apex, said extension forming the fore part of the vessel and the base of the triangle forming the aft part, the auxiliary sections being located at the ends of the base;

wherein the seagoing vessel is configured such that by appropriate ballasting the entire vessel can be rotated so that the main section assumes an approximately vertical condition and can then be secured to the jacket structure so that the auxiliary buoyancy sections are located on opposites sides of the jacket structure, and then deballasted to rotate the vessel back to a generally horizontal position; and with regard to claim 6,

characterized in that a transverse buoyancy section (124, 126) bridges the gap between the auxiliary buoyancy sections, each auxiliary buoyancy section comprising a single column; with regard to claim 7,

characterized in that at least the main section of the vessel is made from stiffened flat steel plates (per col. 13, line 31 through 37);

with regard to claim 8,

characterized in that it semi-permanent ballast in the lower parts of the auxiliary buoyancy sections; and

with regard to claim 10,

characterized in that it has external rounded surfaces at the lower ends of the auxiliary buoyancy sections configured to permit the vessel, when in use, to pivot towards or away from said jacket structure while in contact with the seabed.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1 through 4, 9, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crout et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,823,564 A).

With regard to claim 9, Crout et al. '564 further teach a pump room and control room, however, not in the transverse buoyancy section and fore part, respectively. It would have been an obvious design choice for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the vessel such that the pump room would be positioned in the transverse buoyancy section and the control room in the fore part since the modification would have merely required the relocation of the pump and control rooms.

With regard to claims 1 through 4, 11 and 12, the method steps recited therein are an obvious variant, specifically the reversal, of the method of installation inherent to the use of the vessel disclosed by Crout et al. '564. The claimed method steps would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art desiring to use the vessel to remove an offshore jacket structure at the time of invention.

***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 through 12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TARA MAYO-PINNOCK whose telephone number is (571)272-6992. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571-272-6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/TARA MAYO-PINNOCK/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3671

tmp  
15 March 2009